

Jeremiah 31: 31-34, Hebrews 5: 7-9 John 12: 20-33

FOCUS: We must die to self to bear much fruit.

In the first reading today, the Prophet Jeremiah announces to the Jewish people that God will establish a new covenant with them, and it will be written in their hearts rather than on stone tablets. In the past they were unfaithful to the covenant God made with Moses. In the new covenant, God will speak directly and personally to each individual, forgiving sin and asking for a dying to self and a return to God in faithfulness. God is requesting an obedience which comes from the depth of one's heart. "I will be their God and they shall be my people."

Obedience which comes from the heart is highlighted in today's reading from the Letter to the Hebrew's. The author describes Jesus as a mediator of the new covenant. The obedience of Jesus to the Father's will has made him the source of our salvation for all who in turn obey him.. Because of Jesus' prayer for us and his suffering and death, we are saved and can now see death as a transformation into eternal life.

The general meaning of the parable of the grain of wheat fallen to the earth is clear. Jesus is the grain of wheat. By His death He becomes the abundant harvest from which all humanity can receive the fruit of life—a share in the glorification of Christ. To be where Jesus is, his followers must show a determination similar to his own, even to the point of giving their lives. All must detach themselves from their lives in the world in order to preserve them for eternal life.

God the Father sent his Son into the world. Jesus conformed himself to his Father's will, showing to what point obedience must go. By dying on the cross, Jesus has defeated the evil one whose goal is to prevent human beings from living in harmony with God, themselves, and each other.

Jesus is the grain of what fallen into the earth. He has risen, like a field laden with ripe grain. Lifted up on the cross, Jesus is the sign and source of salvation for all those who look to him with faith, and follow him into eternal life." ... unless the grain of wheat falls to earth and dies, it remains just a grain of what. But if it dies, it will bear much fruit." This Lent, may we die to self and ask God to create a new heart in us so that we, too, may bear much fruit.

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THURSDAY, 10 APRIL, 7 PM, MCCW PROGRAM: "RAISING CATHOLIC KIDS"

Deacon Tony Ferraiuolo will give us a talk about Catholic children. He is married with 2 grown children and a grandson and has served as a deacon in the Archdiocese of New York since 1986. He will be speaking from the heart, as both a member of the clergy and a parent. For anyone who can attend early, Father Vince will hear confessions from 6:30 to 7 PM. We will also say the Rosary at 6:45 PM. Mass will start at 7 PM with the program, food, and fellowship to follow.

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To think of Lent only as a time of penance is to do it an injustice. While the traditional practice of "doing something" for Lent is praiseworthy, there is much more to this wonderful season than just additional practices of piety or acts of penance and mortification. In Lent the Church calls us to *metanoia*. *METANOIA* connotes a change of mind and heart, altering one's mind-set toward whole new ways of thinking and acting. This involves taking a look at where we are and trying to see where we ought to be. It involves testing our values and discerning how they stack up against the values that Jesus offers his followers. Fortunately, *metanoia* is not something we have to do all by ourselves. God's word gives us a lot of help in the process, as does the example of our brothers and sisters in the Lord who are engaged, during these weeks, in the same exercise.

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MARRIED COUPLES:

Main Street Florist is offering to provide beautiful flowers for our chapel. You are invited to purchase a *Lilly* in memory of a loved one and have it delivered to MHT for Easter. Please call Lisa at 446-4749 for information and cost.

A volunteer health center to provide primary care for uninsured and underserved citizens of Highland Falls and Fort Montgomery is opening in the next few months. You do not need medical skills to help-just a love of mercy. Please contact Dr. Vic McGlaughlin at 938-6891 or on exchange mail for more information about how you can be involved to address a need in our community.

You know, O Mary, how often our souls have been the sanctuaries of your Son who hates iniquity. / Obtain for us then a deep hatred of sin and that purity of heart which will attach us to God alone so that our every thought, word and deed may tend to His greater glory. / Obtain for us also a spirit of prayer and self-denial that we may

recover by penance what we have lost by sin and at length attain to that blessed abode where you are the Queen of angels and of men. Amen

Jesus, we humbly ask you to glorify in heaven and on earth, the servant of God, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who generously participated in Your sufferings, who loved Thee so much and labored for the glory of your heavenly Father and for the good of souls.

With confidence, we beseech thee to grant us, through her intercession the grace of ... (Healing of Michael Kwinn III) which we ardently desire.

Pray: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen (3 times)*

Format borrowed from Prayer for Intercession of Padre Pio